

Dear family and friends,

The month of September has brought relief from the scorching heat of August. The daily temperatures now range from the low 70's to the mid 90's. Power requirements are down and maintenance is picking up. The Bears continue to offer world class hospitalization to the great soldiers of V Corps. The base camps are improving slowly with the opening of more mess halls and a gradual increase in menu items and quality of preparation. Some expansion of sleeping space has decompressed the billets, offering more room for the fall and winter months. And we continue to improve our clinical abilities with faster medical logistics, improved lab services, and improved imaging.

There are only 100 shopping days until Christmas, so let me speak for a bit about the holiday season. Christmas and Hanukah decorations are encouraged as are holiday gift giving and Christmas cheer. Lights and trees (plastic and metal -- no living trees) are allowed in the sleeping areas. Religious symbols are permitted. Please allow extra time for mailing. The mailing addresses are:

Bear North: Soldier's name, V Corps, 21st CSH B Co., LSA Diamondback,
APO AE 09325

Bear South: Soldier's name, V Corps, 21st CSH A Co/HHD, LSA Anaconda,
APO AE 09302-1275

Any extra support you can give your loved ones at this time of the year is greatly appreciated.

Your soldiers are involved in a new hospital construction project at Balad Air Base, Bear South. This will involve a lot of planning and prepare the way for follow-on units to improve care and hospital conditions. It adds one more facet to the many things that your soldiers are doing -- split-based operations, running a medical task force, interfacing with maneuver units, and now new hospital construction, in addition to great trauma and surgical care. Thanks for all of the support you give us.